

Cholerton's famous comment on the Moscow Trials - that everything about them was true except the facts - Diplomats and Intelligence agents, in my experience, are even bigger liars than journalists, and the historians who try to reconstruct the past out of 'their records are, for the most part, dealing in fantasy.

A. T. Cholerton of the London Daily Telegraph

"Everything is true, except for the facts," A. T. Cholerton

Grigory Mairanovsky (1899, [Batumi](#) – 1964) was a [Soviet biochemist](#) and [poison](#) developer.

Mairanovsky was born in the [Russian Empire](#) to a family of [Georgian Jews](#).^[1] He started as a member of the [General Jewish Labour Bund](#) there before joining the [Bolshevik Party](#) in 1920. There Mairanovsky became the head of several secret laboratories in the Bach Institute of Biochemistry in [Moscow](#) (1928–1935). As the head of [Laboratory No. 1](#) of the [NKVD](#) (1938–1946), he initiated the secret poison program conducted by the Soviet secret police services. He used [political prisoners](#) for experiments with poisons^{[citation needed][dubious – discuss]}. His classified PhD thesis defended in 1940 was entitled "Biological activity of the products of interaction of [mustard gas](#) with [human] skin tissues".

Mairanovsky participated personally in political [assassinations](#) as a member of the [Pavel Sudoplatov](#) team in the 1940s.^{[2][3][4]} These assassinations include that of the American spy for the Soviets, [Isaiah Oggins](#).

He was arrested in 1951, in connection with the arrest of [Viktor Abakumov](#), and spent 10 years in prison. After his release, he headed a biochemical laboratory.